



Keys to a Successful Solution Implementation Effort

Over the last several years we've learned a thing or two about what separates a good or average system implementation effort from a successful solution implementation. Those that are great have a few things in common. Not surprisingly they all have great leadership, excellent communication and follow a plan.

In this blog, we'll address some of the most critical steps to a successful solution implementation, and what we think is the recipe for success.

Selection is Everything

It's very common for biotech and pharmaceutical companies to rely on solution providers for their serialization and compliance needs. Identifying and selecting the right solution provider is a lengthy and challenging process. The correct solution provider can mean successful long-term outcomes like supply chain optimization and cost savings, but choose the wrong solution provider, and your manufacturing lines could experience production and fulfillment issues or worse yet; they could come to a screeching halt.

Identify a Project Sponsor

While selecting right vendor is essential, it is just as important to identify the right internal project sponsor to work with the solution implementation team to communicate issues, risks, and status to their organization and work hand-in-hand with the vendor to resolve issues. The project sponsor is typically someone from within the business unit implementing the software, and they have overall internal responsibility and accountability for the success of the project. Finally, they ensure the solution provider delivers on the requirements identified in the Statement of Work or contract.

Create a Project Plan

It seems like a no-brainer, but often in haste to get started; project planning takes a back seat. A good solution provider will put together a project plan with activities and dates. The project sponsor should review the project plan with his /her internal team and make sure there are no issues. If there are dependencies, the project plan should reflect those dependencies.

Identify who will be responsible for updating the project plan and how often it will be updated and stick to it. Driving the schedule and activities helps to ensure implementation occurs on time – if the project plan deviates from the schedule – you’ll be able to communicate why and know the impact quickly.

Trading Partner Identification and Connection Requests

Identifying and alerting all trading partners before implementation not only helps the solution provider make quick work of onboarding trading partners, but also puts trading partners on alert for requests. Trading partners are busy too, and they work best when they know a request to connect is coming. Additionally, early identification of trading partners and their preferred method of connection identifies those with compatible systems and connections and those that do not. Knowing this will allow the implementation team to come up with strategies to address difficult connections and keep the project sponsor apprised of potential risks and issues.

Communicate the Status of Risks and Issues

One of the primary reasons system implementation projects fail is from lack of communication. Before implementation, it is wise to sit down with the project sponsor and solution provider’s leadership team to identify potential risks and issues. For each risk assess the level of impact and outline a mitigation strategy. However, if a risk should ever become an issue, quickly elevate it to the project sponsor and leadership team. By the time a risk becomes an issue, it’s often too late to mitigate with little to no impact, so it’s best to have a plan to reduce risks to upfront and actively mitigate issues if they should occur.

Conduct Lessons Learned

It may sound cliché, but there is so much to be gained for both the customer and the solution provider by conducting a post-mortem or lessons learned. Even if implementation is a success, it is vital to document what went well. If the project was challenging, this step allows both parties to discuss what went wrong. If there are open issues, it will provide the vendor the opportunity to resolve it for the customer. A good solution provider will always work hard to resolve any issue and make sure things are right and fixed before handoff.

Summary

While there are more steps to any serialization implementation effort, at a minimum follow these, with them you'll avoid common pitfalls, without them, you'll experience unnecessary delays and certain difficulties.

[Contact us](#) today to learn more about our approach to successful solution implementation, [serialization](#) and our [track and trace solutions](#).

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